

Top Secret

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Monday August 9, 1976

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State Department review completed

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NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION
Unauthorized Disclosure Subject to Criminal Sanctions

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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Monday, August 9, 1976.

The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

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LEBANON: Situation Report

25X1 [] Fighting continued throughout the weekend in east Beirut as Christian militiamen moved to consolidate their control over the Muslim enclave of Nabaa and the Tall Zatar refugee camp. The Christians--perhaps with Syrian complicity--have been taking advantage of Damascus' repeated postponements of the Syrian-Palestinian-Lebanese truce committee meeting forcibly to eliminate their adversaries from the eastern sector of the capital.

25X1 [] The Syrians gave no reason for their latest cancellation of the meeting scheduled to convene Saturday in Shtawrah. Although President Asad's difficulties in forming a new cabinet may have prompted the request, it appears more likely that the Syrians are stalling implementation of the cease-fire on behalf of the Christians.

25X1 [] The Syrians reportedly are balking over an alleged leftist proviso that the truce committee restrict its work to security matters and that it consider replacing Syrian troops with Arab League forces. A meeting between Phalanges Party leader Jumayyil and former Muslim premier Saeb Salam may be a first step by the Christians and Syrians to replace leftist representatives on the committee with traditional Muslim leaders.

25X1 [] The Christians have heretofore ignored the largely discredited Muslim establishment, but they may now have decided to use Salam and other conservative Muslims to undercut Kamal Jumblatt and his militant allies.

25X1 [] The Red Cross evacuation effort on Friday removed only 74 people from the camp. The attack on the Red Cross team by snipers surrounding the pick-up point for evacuees has reportedly forced the Red Cross to permanently abandon further efforts to enter the camp. The Red Cross' decision apparently prompted some 400 families to flee the camp under heavy fire over the weekend.

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[redacted] Most Lebanese believe the Christians fired on the evacuation convoy, and Red Cross officials also accused them of shelling the Beirut airport late Friday while a Red Cross plane was on the runway. [redacted]

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[redacted] //Although the Phalangists apparently are not yet prepared to abandon their cooperation with the Syrians or their efforts to compromise with Palestinian leaders, their uncertainties have almost certainly diluted their effectiveness in checking the extremism of Camille Shamun and President Franjiyah. Shamun and Franjiyah are probably largely responsible for the Christians' blatant violations of the cease-fire accord and, more generally, for a heady new confidence among Christians that they can achieve a total military victory over their adversaries.//

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EGYPT-LIBYA: Bombing

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[REDACTED] Egypt claims it has "definite evidence" that Libya was responsible for the explosion of two bombs yesterday in a government building in Cairo that injured 15 people.

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[REDACTED] The Egyptian deputy interior minister charged that the incident was planned personally by Libyan President Qadhafi to make it appear that security in Egypt is poor. The deputy minister also announced that the Egyptian who planted the bombs--and who was among the injured--had had extensive contacts with Libyan officials.

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[REDACTED] Although Cairo would be inclined at this time to charge Libya with responsibility for any terrorist act regardless of its real perpetrator, there is ample precedent for Libyan-sponsored sabotage operations in Egypt over the past two years. Few of the previous incidents, however, have been on as large a scale as yesterday's bombings.

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SYRIA: New Cabinet

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[REDACTED] Syrian President Asad yesterday installed a new cabinet formed by newly appointed Prime Minister Khulayfawi.

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[REDACTED] The retention of four principal members of the former government--including Foreign Minister Khaddam and Defense Minister Talas--signifies that no substantial changes in Syria's political or economic policies are to be expected. Asad wants the new government to attempt to solve the serious housing and transportation problems as well as to attack the corruption and bureaucratic inertia that have characterized Syria's economic development over the past few years.

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[] The inclusion of more Baathists from the party's regional command level probably is designed to bolster the cabinet's ability to marshal support for domestic policies.

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[] Asad made no attempt to broaden his base of support by bringing in representatives from Syrian opposition groups. The new cabinet, like the old, is dominated by the Baath Party and Sunni Muslims. Four minor political parties retain their traditional portfolios.

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[] The only significant changes were the replacement of the deputy prime minister for economic affairs and the appointment of Syria's internal security chief as the new interior minister. The deputy prime minister reportedly was ousted as part of Khulayfawi's effort to cleanse the cabinet of officials closely identified with corruption.

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[] The promotion of the internal security chief reflects the regime's belief that a stronger figure is needed to direct the Interior Ministry's efforts to deal with new security problems created by the large numbers of Lebanese refugees in Syria, Iraqi-directed terrorism, and internal strains stemming from opposition to Syrian involvement in Lebanon.

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[] The unusual delay in forming the new cabinet reportedly stemmed from the need to make arrangements for the disposition of the deputy prime minister for economic affairs and to achieve the proper balance among the groups that make up the ruling national front coalition. []

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USSR-SOMALIA: Vice President's Visit

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[] The USSR played host last week week to an official delegation from Somalia headed by Vice President Ali Samantar. The Soviets almost certainly attempted to calm Somali misgivings about Moscow's warming relations with Ethiopia.

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[] The emphasis seemed to be on party ties. Samantar saw Politburo member Kirilenko, who evidently was standing in for the vacationing General Secretary Brezhnev. The Soviet foreign economic aid chief, and party secretary Ponomarev also figured prominently in the visit.

[] Soviet General Staff chief Kulikov also participated in the talks, but military matters do not appear to have received prominent attention.

[] According to the Soviet media, groundwork was laid for a further development of "large-scale" cooperation in political, economic, cultural, and "other" fields.

[] The Soviets may have felt the need for some fence mending following a recent visit to the USSR by a high-level Ethiopian government delegation. There are indications that Somalia was unhappy about the red-carpet treatment accorded the Ethiopians and the prospect that Soviet military assistance to Ethiopia may have been discussed during the visit.

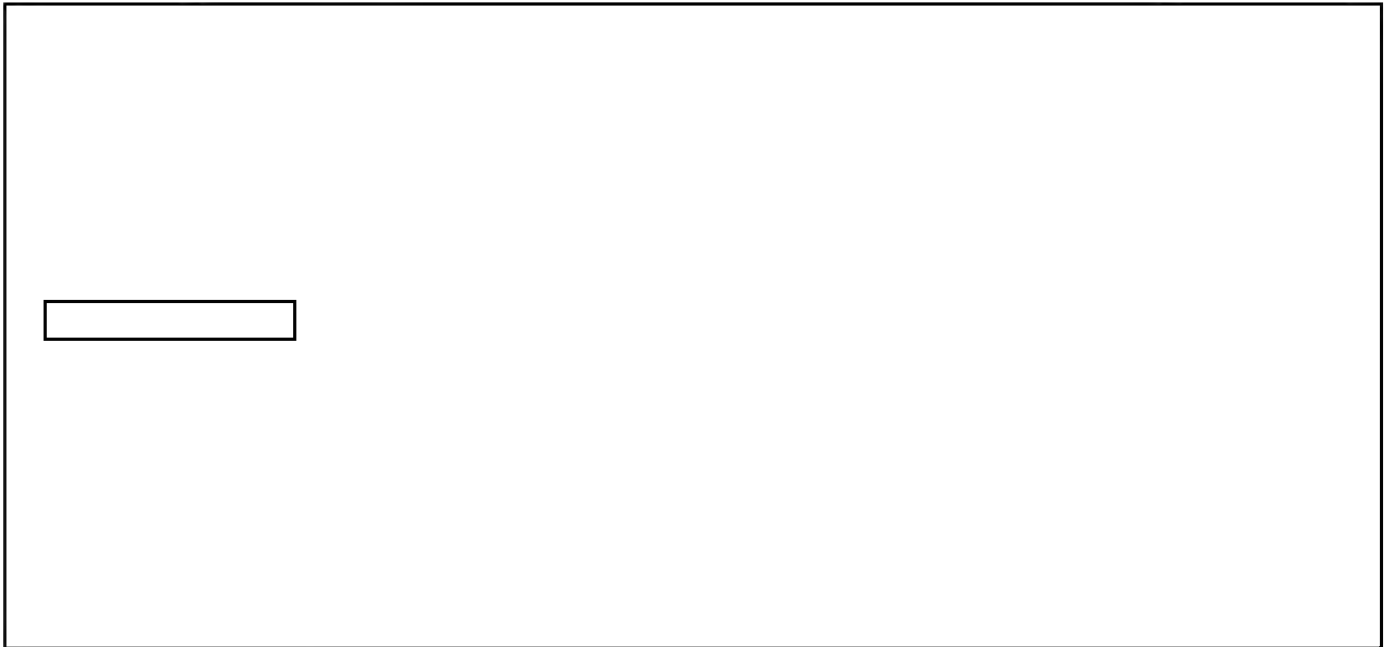
[] A senior Egyptian diplomat in Mogadiscio recently told the US ambassador that President Siad secretly sent a personal emissary to Moscow while the Ethiopians were still there. The emissary was reportedly instructed to tell the Soviets that Somalia would view any "military arrangements" concluded between the USSR and Ethiopia as a most serious matter.

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SPAIN: Carrillo's Return

[REDACTED] The Spanish government appears likely to drag its feet on whether to permit exiled Spanish Communist Party leader Santiago Carrillo to return home. Carrillo made a highly publicized application for a passport at the Spanish embassy in Paris last week.

[REDACTED] The government foresees the possibility of clashes between the left and right if Carrillo were to return and has been working behind the scenes to persuade him to remain abroad for the time being.

[REDACTED] The Spanish government is likely to let Carrillo come back eventually, but a Spanish official said Madrid wants to prevent a Communist-orchestrated theatrical event like the one that characterized Portuguese Communist leader Cunhal's return to Lisbon in 1974. Conservative military leaders reportedly oppose Carrillo's return. He would require protection against right wing groups who blame him for murders of nationalists during the Civil War.

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[redacted] Carrillo's return is a political question, not a legal one, according to a Spanish official. He noted that even if criminal charges were made against Carrillo, they would be invalidated by the 30-year statute of limitations on civil war crimes that took effect in 1969. Carrillo would not be subject to criminal charges for his political activities abroad.

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[redacted] According to the official, only about 12 persons have been listed as politically ineligible for Spanish passports-- Carrillo and Communist Party president Dolores Ibarruri were among them. [redacted]

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USSR-AUSTRALIA: Soviets Warn Fraser

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[REDACTED] //The most authoritative public statement to date expressing Soviet dissatisfaction over the conservative policies of the new Australian government appeared in an article in *Red Star* last week. The article makes no threats, but it almost certainly is intended to buttress private Soviet warnings to the Australians to mute their anti-Soviet polemics.//

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[REDACTED] //The article, pegged to Prime Minister Fraser's recent trip to Washington, focused on the increased US-Australian military cooperation--particularly nuclear--that allegedly resulted from the trip. *Red Star* charged that Australia's new policies are making it possible for the US to recoup its losses in Indochina and Thailand and close the gap in its chain of strategic bases stretching from the Far East to the Persian Gulf. The only Asians who approve "the dangerous, adventurous trends" in Australian foreign policy, according to the article, are the Chinese.//

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[REDACTED] //Moscow has been disturbed about the policies of the Liberal/Country coalition since it came to power last December, but responses in the Soviet media to the repeated anti-Soviet statements of Prime Minister Fraser have been restrained. Apart from occasional pot shots in the central press, criticism of Fraser has been limited to broadcasts to Australia and to the less authoritative press.//

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[REDACTED] //There has been no effect yet on Soviet-Australian diplomatic relations. Deputy Prime Minister Anthony, who visited Moscow in July, said his visit went well and that there was no specific discussion of Australia's anti-Soviet statements. Economic relations seem similarly unaffected. [REDACTED]

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